eluding Andhra Pradesh. As a part of this effort, the Board has established a Regional Research Station at R. V. Nagar, extension centres at Chintnpalli (two) and Araku Vallley, Regional Office at Vishakapatnam and a coffee demonstration farm at Minumuluru.

Trade Gap

872. SHRI S. S. AHLUWALIA: Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the trade-gap has been consistently widening;

(b) details of trade gap as on 31st January, 1995 and the corresponding figure for the same period last year;

(c) factors responsible for widening of trade gap, particularly since the recent past despite substantial improvement in the benefit package with a view to boosting India's export, during the period; and

(d) what measures have been taken/ contemplated by Government to narrow the trade gap gradually?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE (SHRI P. CHIDAMBARAM): (a) and (b) Trade deficit estimated at US $1837.41 million during April-January, 1994-95 though higher than US$581.68 million during April—January, 1993-94 is lower than US $3596.39 million during corresponding period in 19992-93.

(c) Trade gap has widened in the current year due to increase in Non-POL imports consequent upon increased growth of industry, and import-linked exports considering that major part of imports is still constituted by raw materials, intermediates, inputs and capital goods.

(d) Trade deficit is within the manageable limit considering the present *level* of foreign exchange reserved.:

Auction of tea gardens of TTCI

873. SHRI RATNA BAHADUR RAI: Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that tenders were invited for auction of tea gardens under the T.T.C.I.; and

(b) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE (SHRI P. CHIDAMBARAM): (.a) and (b) SBI Capital Markets Ltd., who have been engaged for finalising sale of the tea gardens vested in TTCI, have invited tenders asking for expression of interest/ financial offer from parties who are interested in purchase of four gardens owned by TTCI viz. Pashok Tear Estate, Vah Tokvar Tea Estate, Looksan Tea Estate and Potong Tea Estate. Similar Tender for Pathini Tea Estate is in process of finalisation.

Targets for exports

874. DR. B. B. DUTTA: Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to refer to the answer to UnStarred Question 1730 given in the Rajya Sabha on 19-12-94 and state:

(a) the target set for export during 1994-95;

(b) how this has been achieved; and

(c) details of steps taken to increase exports especially in the Rupee Payment Area?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE (SHRI P. CHIDAMBARAM): (a) No export target has been set for 1994-95. However, Trade and Industry hve been exhorted to achieve export growth of 25 per cent during the current year. The Eight Plan (1992-97) envisages an export target of 13.6 per cent annum in value terms (at 1991-92 prices) during the Plan period.